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SOCIOLOGICAL NOTES.

Sociological Field Work.—Since we published under this title a brief statement* of an attempt to utilize those object lessons, especially accessible in large cities whereby the theories discussed in practical courses in economics and sociology may be better illustrated and brought home to the minds of the students, Professor Richard T. Ely and Mr. Edward D. Jones have published† some account of similar work in the University of Wisconsin. Further experience at the University of Pennsylvania confirms our earlier estimate of the utility and high pedagogical value of frequent excursions with small classes or sections of large classes whereby the student may be brought into direct contact with the facts of industrial economics as they are exhibited in the factory and workshop and with the opinions and points of view of the average *entrepreneur*, labor leader, union and non-union man, and with their view of the problems with which they are daily concerned. Such work, if properly directed, not only reacts favorably on the text-book or lecture course, but familiarizes many a student with real pictures of our complex social life which he would not otherwise get. Apropos of the discussion in a recent number of the *Charities Review*, of the Method of Teaching Charities and Corrections in the University of Wisconsin, we would say that the excursion plan doubtless yields more immediate results in connection with courses on Charities and Corrections, where large institutions may be visited, than in other more general sociological courses. The instructor also experiences much less difficulty in obtaining the necessary permission and the co-operation of the authorities of an average institution, especially a public one, than in dealings with private organizations and business enterprises. The results of the work, however, in its effect on students are none the less important and possible in the one case than in the other. It seems hardly necessary to further discuss the advisability of the general plan. The idea has already gained sufficient ground in many institutions to warrant us in proceeding to another stage of inquiry, namely, to discuss methods whereby the results of such visits may be of the highest value, and at the same time be made permanent. At the University of Pennsylvania, our plan at first was to hold a session after every two or

* ANNALS, Jan., 1895, Vol. v, p. 584.

† *Lend a Hand*, 1895, and *Charities Review*, April, 1896.

three excursions, at which a ten or fifteen minute report of each excursion was read by some one especially delegated for that purpose.

Following these formal reports there was a general discussion on the basis of the notes which every one was expected to take in connection with every excursion and, in this way, guided by the instructor in charge who sometimes furnished additional material for purposes of comparison of local conditions with those existing in other parts of the country or in foreign countries, an attempt was made to collect and fix any valuable information that may have been secured. Of course frequent reference by way of illustration was made in the ordinary lecture courses to these excursions. But all the excursion work is entirely outside of and independent of the regular courses. It has been compulsory for a few students and voluntary for others. Latterly in addition to the above plan and in part superseding it it has been found advisable to require the students to write short essays on the institutions or industries visited. To do this he must make use of his notes as a basis but also use additional material so far as the instructor is able to furnish him with reading references. This plan has worked remarkably well in connection with the excursions to charitable and reformatory institutions where the additional material was abundant and readily accessible in the volumes of the reports of the National Conference of Charities and Corrections, the International Congress of Charities, Correction and Philanthropy and other well-known sources. Mr. Jones in the article already referred to describes another method whereby each person who goes on the excursion writes out a slip giving a summary of his own observations and suggestions. The points of value on these slips or individual reports are tabulated by the instructor and the final report, made by him, distributed to the class.

Copies of two of these reports are appended in Mr. Jones' article. The value of any particular method depends so much upon the temperament and habits of the individual instructor that it is probably unwise to criticise. It seems that the method outlined by Mr. Jones might commend itself in cases where the time of the student is too much taken up with his general work to allow of more than a hasty review of the excursions. But unless carefully guarded against by the instructor it seems that these reports might be hastily made in a dogmatic way, the burden of the work thrown upon the instructor, and the students fail to get the benefit that would come from a broader and more detailed discussion or statement on their own part concerning their work.

Classification of the Feeble-Minded.—Nordau's discussion of degeneration has doubtless awakened a new interest in many of the

pathological questions that arise in sociology. His distinctions of classes of degenerates are by no means well made, and much confusion is sure to arise in the minds of the unwary student who has to use books of the Nordau type. The feeble-minded constitute a large proportion of degenerates in general, and it is really helpful to find a clear and concise discussion of a simple classification of this class, with which the ordinary charity worker as well as students of social pathology come into frequent contact. One of the leading institutions in the United States, where about one thousand feeble-minded are receiving thorough treatment, is the Pennsylvania Training School for Feeble-minded Children at Elwyn, Pa. This institution owes its present splendid equipment largely to Dr. Kerlin, who was himself a widely recognized authority on the treatment of neurotic diseases. His first assistant, Dr. M. W. Barr, who is now, since Dr. Kerlin's death, chief resident physician of the institution at Elwyn, made the following admirable explanation of the classification employed at Elwyn to the Directors of the Poor Association of Pennsylvania when recently in session at Philadelphia: *

"The later diagnoses of alienists determining racial characteristics show traits unmistakable by which can be traced the wonderful influences of degeneration; working downward, producing the idiot, the imbecile, the abnormally backward or peculiarly precocious child, developing not unfrequently the moral imbecile or the habitual criminal; working upward, by the expanding of one side of the being to the detriment or prejudice of the other, producing the monomaniac developing into the artist in many lines; in short, the man of genius towering above his fellows by abnormal growth, overtopping alike their weakness and his own.

"Let us look a little nearer at this classification. Broadly considered, we find two groups—imbecility representing the improvable, idiocy the unimprovable—both of these modified and influenced by the potent factors of epilepsy and paranoia. But, according to the nomenclature given so clearly by Dr. Kerlin, and now generally recognized, mental defectives are divided into four general classes:

- 1—The Idiot—Apathetic and Excitable.
- 2—The Idio-Imbecile.
- 3—The Imbecile—low, middle and high grade.
- 4—The Moral Imbecile.

"This nomenclature is capable of further subdivisions based on pathological and ethnic classification. For instance we have in the first

* "Children of Day" was the title of Dr. Barr's address, which is printed in the Proceedings of the Twenty-first Annual Convention of Directors of Poor and Charities of Pennsylvania, Phila., 1895, and was also privately printed.

class the microcephalic idiot and hydrocephalic idiot—children with heads abnormally small and abnormally large. In the idio-imbecile we have Mongolian and the Malayan types, so called from physiological resemblance to these races.

“Poorly developed physically, the idiot rarely, if ever, stands alone. He delights in being rocked and held, cries when he is hungry, and in fact, his intelligence is that of a babe who recognizes his nurse and but little more.

“Some exceptions to this rule show physical development apparently normal. The apathetic idiot is more common than the excitable who usually either dies in infancy, or sinks into apathy.

“The idio-imbecile, as the name implies, stands between the idiot and the imbecile, and includes not only the Mongolian but the Cretin. He is mostly dwarfed, with speech and hearing not infrequently defective, and is susceptible of improvement in but a slight degree. He may learn some simple thing as to knit, to weave mats or hammocks, or indeed any of the simple manual occupations, but never to read or write. For these two classes, as may readily be seen, we provide little beyond the custodial care best adapted to their peculiar needs, the real benefit being found in the families relieved of such burdens; it is computed that for every idiot sequestered, two if not four useful members are released to society.

“We come now to speak of the imbecile whom we have cited as the improvable class, grading from low, through middle, to high. The first of these is susceptible of training, always under direction, for good service in the garden, the farm, the laundry, and the various departments of household service, or in the simplest occupations of the workshops. He develops no aptitude for intellectual work in the schools, rarely if ever learns to read, and after a certain point his improvement is but relative.

“The middle grade shows children capable of some advance in intellectual training in reading, writing, color, form and number work; but mental development is for them best obtained through the medium of simple handicrafts having their initiative in the occupations of the kindergarden. Our children of this grade contribute largely to the work of the institution in its various departments.

“The third, or high grade, shows children frequently strong in body and but slightly deficient mentally, capable of progressing slowly as far as the ordinary grammar school grade, and developing often an aptitude for music, drawing and the various manual arts. These are the backward children that the schools complain of, whose development under excessive pressure or the excitement of competition, would inevitably be arrested. So nearly normal are some of these,

that their defects would perhaps be noticed only by the initiated. It is chiefly that lack of will power and judgment which not only precludes the attainment of success in life, but which also renders them an easy prey to the designing and the vicious. Here, working under direction, sheltered from the world, and what is of still greater moment, society preserved from them, they lead a life of happy occupation, contributing largely to the support of themselves and others.

"To this class chiefly belongs the moral imbecile; as a child we find him the *bete noir* of the nursery, the terror of the neighborhood; in youth often conspicuous in the police courts; difficult to control within the walls of an institution, in the world doubly so, he must there inevitably join the ranks of the habitual criminal. The absence of moral nature—what we term not immoral but amoral—is often united with extreme mental precocity, which, together with a pleasing exterior and engaging manners, renders him a dangerous member of society from which he should be forever secluded."

"Of this class Dr. Kerlin repeatedly affirms:

"'There exists a small class of children to whom the offices of the school room should not be applied. . . . They but tender to foster the ill we would suppress. In teaching them to write, we give them an illimitable power of mischief. In educating them at all, except to manual labor, we are adding to their armament of deception and misdemeanor.'

"A lifelong detention of this class is most desirable. Under strict unceasing surveillance, constant congenial employment and happy environment, many of them will contribute largely to the support of the community of which they are members, their sequestration preventing production and reproduction, preserving the nation from a flood of the worst type of imbecility and crime. . . . That imbecility is rapidly on the increase there cannot be the slightest doubt, and that heredity is a potent factor in its production is also true. The census of 1880 reports six thousand five hundred and three idiots and feeble-minded in the State of Pennsylvania alone. In 1890 eight thousand seven hundred and fifty-three are reported. As people are loath to acknowledge the existence of this defect in their own families, we are sure that many remain unaccounted for, thus we may well estimate the total in round numbers to be ten thousand if not more, and that to-day there are nearly one hundred thousand, if not more, mentally defective children in the United States."

Public Baths, Laundry and Public Comfort Stations in New York City.*—All the larger cities in the United States have had some

* The substance of this note has been furnished by Dr. Wm. H. Tolman, Secretary of the Mayor's Committee on Public Baths and Comfort Stations.

facilities for public baths and a few inadequate provisions for public urinals, etc., in recent years as a result of the private enterprise of benevolent individuals and societies. Nowhere have the municipal authorities as yet tried to provide anything but a mere palliative for the sufferings of the very poor in hot weather. How much might be done that would prove of great social value to many classes beside the very poor and help to instil really healthful habits among the people is seen from a study of foreign experience, especially that of London and English cities in general. In New York the Society for Improving the Condition of the Poor has taken the matter up in a thorough way, and has demonstrated its need and possibilities on a small scale and is just now turning the matter over to the public authorities where it properly belongs. The Mayor has had a special committee at work to examine plans and that committee has reported to a public meeting, held recently at City Hall under official auspices. The plans then adopted, which will be carried out substantially in New York, are so significant of a line of social preventive work greatly needed in all our large cities that we give them here in some detail. These plans have already been approved by General Charles H. T. Collis, Commissioner of Public Works.

They include a public bath (the first of a series) to be built in Tompkins Square. The bath is in the style known as Italian, and is very simple and dignified, and while it will be as low as possible so as to be unobtrusive and not to obstruct the air and sunshine of the park, it will yet have sufficient dignity and massiveness not to appear insignificant or trivial in comparison with the higher buildings on the avenue. Light material will be used, giving a suggestion of purity and cleanliness, and bringing out well the lines and details. The piazzas running along each side form a connection between the designs of the ends, and at the same time give a shady place for benches where people can rest. At the end of the piazza a public drinking fountain will be provided. The entrance for men and boys will be from Avenue B, while the women will enter from the park side, the approaches to their part being screened by shrubbery.

The plan has been drawn with a view of entirely separating males and females the moment they enter the building. The men's waiting-room contains seats for 100, the women's will seat over fifty. Both of these rooms are overlooked by a circular office; this office and the partition between the rooms being seven feet six inches in height. Every person who enters can be observed by the person in charge, and no one in any part of the building where there are females, whether bathers or employes, can go to any part where there are males, or *vice versa*, without passing through the central controlling office on the main

floor. The waiting-rooms, as well as the main bathing hall, will be very cheerful, with an abundance of light.

On the main floor there are 28 rain baths for men, and 17 rain baths for boys, and on the second floor there are 14 rain baths and 10 tub baths for men, making in all 69 baths for men and boys. The arrangement is such that the proportion of boys' and men's baths can be reversed at times when most men are at work, and public schools are not in session. For women there are 17 rain baths on the main floor and 10 tub baths on the second floor, a total of 27 baths. Altogether there are 96 baths, a number which should readily accommodate more than one million bathers a year.

All of the rain baths are divided into two equal parts by a rubber curtain, the room first entered serving as a dressing-room. The bath compartment will have rain or ring showers, the latter arranged not to strike the head, and generally preferred by women. In each bath floor will be sunk a marble foot bath. Each set of compartments will be arranged to drain separately. The object of providing some tub baths is for such women and men as are too delicate to stand showers. In order to avoid having too many attendants, each bather, excepting those in tub baths, will be allowed to control his own hot and cold water faucets, but the pipes and faucets will be so arranged that the bather cannot possibly scald himself. In case a bather attempts to overstay his time limit when the baths are crowded, the attendant will be enabled, by cocks placed outside of each bath, to shut off entirely the supply of water, both hot and cold. The attendant will control the quantity and temperature of the water in tub baths to avoid waste. The water will be heated by the well-known German Gegenstrom System. Under this system only the actual amount of steam which is necessary to heat the water is used.

The partitions of the compartments will be mainly of glass, the metal parts being painted with enamel paint, and the doors of light metal similarly painted. At the bottom of the glass partitions will be enameled wire work in slate frames to promote thorough ventilation; the tops of the compartments will be covered with heavy enameled wire work to prevent thieving. The seats and all similar parts are made movable so as to be more easily cleansed. Throughout the main floor solid masonry is used as a foundation; this will avoid cracking due to expansion and contraction of iron beams. A series of passages in the masonry foundation will be utilized for plumbing pipes and for ventilation purposes. The flooring will be of vitrified tiles, which can be used on top of the masonry without any danger of cracking or opening of joints.

The engine and boiler rooms are placed in the basement, and by

means of the brick passages the engineer can readily control all of the main lines of plumbing, as well as the heating and ventilating apparatus, and the air ducts. Fresh air will be drawn down through a large fresh air shaft (which will be built up high above any other part of the structure) by means of fans and electric motors. The temperature will be regulated by the engineer and the air blown to the various parts of the building at a height of about five feet above the floor, and so arranged as to avoid all draughts. The exhaust ducts will all be connected with the large exhaust duct in the roof, where the fans and motors will exhaust the air, and blow it out of doors. In winter the air will be allowed to escape by natural means, but the inlet fans will be used to force in the fresh air. All of these ducts as well as the ceiling lights, skylights, etc., will be controlled by electricity from the engine room. Speaking tubes from all parts of the building will give the engineer a thorough knowledge of the wants of the building at all times.

The laundry is placed on the second floor, so as to obtain the best light and air. There will be accommodation for nineteen women, each of whom will have two tubs for her own use. Centrifugal wringing machines, hot-air drying rooms and other necessary apparatus are provided. A small fee will be charged. The laundry will be thoroughly ventilated and lighted, and an elevator will be provided for the women. It is expected that the laundry will be greatly appreciated by women living in one or two rooms who have no convenience for doing their washing at home. In connection with this building there will be two Public Comfort Stations, one for men, containing sixteen water-closets, twenty urinals, and three wash-basins, and one for women containing fourteen water-closets and four wash-basins. These can be used at any time without entering the main building. Throughout the building everything will be arranged with a view to the avoidance of dust and dirt, so that any part can be hosed out thoroughly at any time.

It is estimated that the amount of the appropriation by the Legislature, \$150,000, will be sufficient to carry out the plans in a proper and substantial way.

Besides this bath-house the Mayor's committee submitted plans for two underground stations, which they think can be built within the appropriation of \$50,000. One of these will be situated in City Hall Park, and the other in Greeley Square, at the junction of Broadway and Sixth avenue and Thirty-second street. The ceilings will be entirely of mason work thus avoiding the expansion and contraction of iron beams and the consequent dampness and leaks. Sufficient height will be left above to fill in with earth and loam so as not to lose

any of the verdure or breathing space now existing. The entrances for men and women will be located at opposite points of the park, and will be screened by shrubbery and ornamental iron railings. The ventilation will be by means of electric exhaust fans which will draw the air from over every water-closet bowl, as well as from over every water-closet and urinal. It is then blown out through an ornamental shaft on top of which will be placed an electric light. There will be rooms for a male and a female attendant, and for coal and heating apparatus. Where the sewer level is above the plumbing fixtures these will discharge into a tight cesspool sunk below the floor, and the matter in the latter will be pumped out and into the sewer at regular intervals by the attendant. The walls will be of light glazed brick, and the partitions mainly of glass, which will be sufficiently opaque to secure proper privacy. Everything will be arranged to avoid dust and to give the utmost light and cleanliness.

These conveniences are very much needed in New York, and should they prove a success, as is expected, it is hoped that others may be erected at intervals throughout the city.